

Internet Access in Nevada County

is provided by a small number of national, regional and local providers. There are a variety of technologies available for Internet services in our rural area each with its plusses and minuses. Internet access speeds include both download and upload components.

All current providers offer asymmetrical speeds, with the upload speed (from you to the Internet) being much slower than the download advertised speed (from the Internet to you). Only a 100% fiber optic network – Fiber to the Home (FTTH) – is capable of offering symmetrical speeds, often 1 Gigabit download and upload. Fiber offers ultra high speeds, reliability, and is future safe as it is scalable for faster speeds.

Types of Service Available and Internet Service Providers:

Fiber Optic

Local telcos and cable companies often say they have “fiber networks” but typically fiber is only used for infrastructure and not connected directly to the home or business. AT&T does offer special 10 Mbps fiber optic connectivity, but it’s expensive and takes time to install – \$400 per month or more for these slow speeds.

Spiral Fiber will begin building an all-underground (wildfire safe) fiber optic network in summer 2021 to 15,000 homes and businesses in and surrounding Nevada City, Penn Valley, Rough & Ready, and south of Grass Valley to start. Spiral will offer 1 Gigabit per second (Gbps) symmetrical speeds, and have no data limits. Sign-ups will begin in April 2021.

Spiral Fiber
530-802-0069
spiral.com/fiber (starting in April 2021)
355 Providence Mine Road, Nevada City CA 95959

Race Telecommunications is offering service via the Bright Fiber Network Project (which was initiated by Spiral) in southeastern Nevada County along the Hwy 174 and Dog Bar Road corridors. Race offers 1 Gigabit per second (Gbps) symmetrical speeds, and has no data limits. Check out availability at the link below.

Race Telecommunications
877-722-3833
race.com/coverage/community/grassvalley/

DSL (Digital Subscriber Service)

DSL is Internet access provided over the copper telephone network. AT&T, the incumbent local exchange carrier (telephone company), has been the primary provider of DSL service although third party providers have been able to offer service on AT&T’s network

In October 2019, AT&T announced that it will no longer be deploying new DSL service anywhere. Those homes

that have DSL will continue with service, but no upgrades in speed will be available.

IMPORTANT: If you are selling a home where DSL is available and want the buyer to also have this service then **DO NOT TURN OFF** either your telephone or DSL service. Otherwise, the new owner will not have internet access. As a courtesy, once escrow is over, make an arrangement with the new owner by adding them onto your bill, having them (of course) pay the bill, then eventually have them remove your name from the service. DSL has no data limits.

Note: Omsoft took over the former Spiral Internet DSL customers in May 2019.

Omsoft – DSL and Omverse

530-758-0119
omsoft.com
1930 5th Street, Suite C, Davis CA 95616

Cable

Locally, Comcast and Suddenlink offer the fast access over a coaxial cable network, that may use fiber optic cable for its backbone, but not to each home. Cable bandwidth in each neighborhood is shared by all the users, which accounts for slower speeds during high-traffic times (early evenings, for instance).

Cable providers have announced data limits.

Comcast / Xfinity

SERVICE AREA: Grass Valley, Nevada City, Penn Valley, and Rough & Ready areas
800-824-2000
comcast.com

Suddenlink

SERVICE AREA: Alta Sierra, parts of south county, Truckee areas
530-268-3731
suddenlink.com



Fixed Wireless

Like mobile phone service, fixed wireless service provides a wireless connection to the Internet from towers and poles on local hilltops. A dish or antenna is placed on the residence to connect to the tower, then a cable brings the service to a router inside.

Next to wireline service (such as cable or DSL) it can be the most robust and reliable broadband service in remote areas where DSL or cable is not available. Because of the geographic diversity of Nevada County and because fixed wireless service requires line-of-sight between your dish and the tower, coverage areas are spotty. These networks can slow down considerably during high customer usage.

These providers have **data limits**:

DigitalPath

SERVICE AREA: western Nevada County up to 5-Mile House
275 Airpark Blvd., Suite 500, Chico CA 95973
digitalpath.net

Colfax.Net

SERVICE AREA: Colfax & parts of Hwy 174 area into Grass Valley
PO Box 1597, Colfax CA 95713
530-346-8411
colfaxnet.com

SmarterBroadband

SERVICE AREA: parts of western Nevada County
15533 Johnson Pl, Grass Valley CA 95949
530-272-4000
smarterbroadband.com

Satellite

Accessing the Internet via satellite was a promise made to rural America to replace dial-up access. The speeds are faster, but the latency (slowness due to distance from residence to satellite and back down again) and data limit policies make it less than ideal.

As of 2021, the new kid on the block is Starlink. Elon Musk has launched hundreds of satellites into low orbit to provide service that is faster and with less latency. Service has become available in Nevada County.

Satellite providers have **data limits**.

Viasat (formerly Exede or WildBlue)

844-204-1647
viasat.com/home-internet/plans/

HughesNet

866-737-2700
hughesnet.com

Starlink

starlink.com or
download the Starlink app on your smartphone

Cellular

Mobile phone providers sell hotspots that provide WiFi connectivity in the home. Like mobile phone data plans, Internet data use is not unlimited. The service is dependent on cellular coverage in the area, which hopefully will improve over time. When this service is the only one available, it's much better than dial-up.

Cellular providers can have **data limits**.

Verizon Wireless

800-922-0204
verizon.com

T-Mobile

800-866-2453
t-mobile.com